

Testimony of
Nancy Mayeda-Brescia, OTD, APRN, MBA, NCSN
Nurse Practitioner
Hartford Public High, School Based Health Center
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Advocacy for School-Based Health Centers

Good Day.

My name is Nancy Mayeda-Brescia, APRN, and I am the Nurse Practitioner assigned to Hartford Public High School's **School Based Health Center (SBHC)**. I am writing testimony against the 10 percent funding cut under the budget plan proposed by Governor Dannel P. Malloy. This cut in funding would directly impact student access to immediate medical practice designed in a school based health center to keep our students in school and learning; keep our children out of the emergency room if it is not warranted; as well as provide immediate physicals, medications, and treatment plans for those under insured, illegals, or no insurance—especially the children immigrating to our City. When students are not in school, they are not productive learners.

In our clinic, we provide a comprehensive array of direct service provision such as dental services, medical services, and behavioral health services. Our team of Nurse Practitioners, Nurses, Dentists, Dental Hygienists, Medical Assistants, and Mental Health Clinicians comprise an accessible school based health center designed to assist ALL students who attend school in the City of Hartford, regardless of socioeconomic status. Assistance comes in many forms—from direct medical care including vaccinations, asthma treatment, medication provision, and specialty medical referrals; all while collaborating with a student's primary care provider for continuity of care/management. I have just seen my sixth student for a college physical and vaccinations—there should be NO excuse why our Hartford graduates would be held out of continuing their education due to medical lapses! We help graduating seniors get the medical paperwork done which requires an advanced level provider/doctor to sign off.

Statistical data suggest that SBHCs are well positioned to address our student's variety of mental health, dental, and medical needs in order to remain in school, attentive to learning, and prepare for life after high school. The SBHC is easy access for a student during the day time hours. Parents/caregivers do not have to leave work, families do not have to reschedule their daily routines, and the children are SEEN by medical providers right in the school. How hard is it for **you** to get a dental appointment? A medical appointment? A Behavioral Health appointment? Not so in a SBHC. From 2009-2013, mental health visits to SBHCs increased by 11% (DPH data, 2013). There are more than 40,000 children and adolescents in our 96 state-funded SBHC's that receive service annually with over 130,000 visits. We need to make sure that the future of our SBHC's continues on a solid base from which our children, our students, and families may build positive and ongoing relationships with routine medical care, preventive medical and dental care, and behavioral health relationships for a "lifetime" of healthy medical care. Thank you.

